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ABSTRACT

A similarity exists in the way minority groups in the sixties and in the seventies used media coverage to achieve recognition. The poor and the blacks in the 1960s and the aged and the handicapped in the 1970s turned to the media as they sought freedom to move, rejected separation and isolation, and sought access and independence by breaking the barriers of accommodations and architecture. The results of a year-long sampling of stories in major big-city daily newspapers point out that the new minorities of the aged and the handicapped are accumulating media coverage in the areas of community development, economics, human and group relations, power and resources, and environment and ecology. Minority stereotypes are being rejected in books and on television, and a new position of respect for the aged and the handicapped is being promoted by politicians. In the future, other fragmented minorities, particularly those with physical limitations, will also insist that their needs be heard. (AEA)

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AGED AND HANDICAPPED SEEK HUMAN QUALITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE IN MEDIA

--Mass Communications Patterns of the New Minorities--

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There is an apparent similarity between the media usage by civil rights groups in the Sixties and the aged and handicapped in the Seventies. The social and physical disadvantage experienced by racial and ethnic groups is likewise experienced by the old and disabled who have also been restricted and segregated. An exploratory comparison of their communications and media habits may be useful in explaining the nature of minorities and the media during social change.

In the early 1960s, the poor and Blacks sought advantages long denied them. Racism and Black Panthers made the headlines. Blacks fought to ride in front of buses and to gain access to other public places, and they marched on Washington with other poor to gain access to communications channels which had previously left them out of the mainstream of American life.

By the 1970's, it was Ageism and the Gray Panthers, and handicapped demanding integration into the mainstream and the rights to jobs and equal opportunity. When a national coalition of disabled and the elderly filed a law suit requiring accessible buses, the President of Disabled in Action in Pennsylvania remarked: "Ten years ago court action made it possible for Blacks to sit anywhere on the bus. We're not asking for any special place to sit. We just want to be able to get on the bus in the first place."[1] The poor's Tent City in Washington has been replaced by mule wagons parked on the White House lawn for appeals to President

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Carter about senior citizens and the handicapped.[2]

Both sets of minorities have sought freedom to move. Both have rejected separation and isolation and sought access and independence by breaking the barriers of both accommodations and architecture. The passive picture of the centenarian as an oddity and the equally rare Black or handicapped "Horatio Alger" was media access of the past. However, the Golden Agers and wheel chair basketball players on news pages are not now sufficient as media public service to the estimated 26 million elderly and handicapped.

Sign language for the deaf and braille for the blind and television sets for the nursing homes are now only one part of the media survival kit for these new minorities. Now active and militant, they see the media of communications to be used by themselves instead of being used by the media. They also see the media as tools to change the society and the view of them held by others. The new minorities therefore have attempted to bring about change by access to setting the public agenda; by changing old stereotypes and creating new images to create a new awareness; and by utilizing media forms for the purpose of advocacy.

Public Agenda for New Minorities in Mass Society

Increase in the number of aged and handicapped is attracting the mass media, which sees consumers--the market basket; while politicians see the ballot box and voters--52 million aged by the year 2030,[3] and millions more physically handicapped thanks to the blessings and curse of modern medicine and technology, which both end and extend life.

The newspaper series and magazine article on the aged are now common.[4] The campus symposia on the senior citizen and the gerontology convention are common as the civil rights rally in the 1960s.[5] Black Panther Eldridge Cleaver's Soul on Ice has been replaced by psychiatrist Robert Butler's 1976 Pulitzer Prize book Why Survive ? Being Old in America. Students are hearing the new Cleaver preach about Jesus, while

campus unions hold sessions on death and dying, and protesters picket for mental health liberation. Youth realize they may eventually become part of the fastest growing minority,[6] as they show concern for the problems of the aged and other handicapped Growing Old in the COuntry of the Young.[7] The media agenda may well have shifted from spotlight on youth to those growing older and from mere quantity of life to quality of life, a media phrase of the Seventies. In The Country of the Young, as John Aldridge put it in his criticism of youth in the Sixties, youth were materialistic and ". . .although they are passiohate about causes and issues---especially as these relate to the quantitative material problems of society, they are strangely indifferent to the questions of quality. . ."[8] But that may be changing as the young grow older.

Indeed, "The Free Speech and People's Park struggles are long gone, but Berkeley has become a mecca for a new, equally radical movement--the growing numbers of handicapped people. . ,"[9] who were encouraged when a quadriplegic was admitted to the university against its will in 1962.[9] In other cities, "The first major legislation barring discrimination against the handicapped may prove to be as pervasive and controversial as civil rights laws prohibiting minority and sex discrimination."[10] If campus concerns for civil rights in the Sixties and the ecological quality of life in the Seventies both affected the media's public agenda in these decades, then the 1980s may be for the new minorities seeking quality rather than mere quantity of life.

In nine basic, functional community areas, a look at the crisis and problem agenda in the press indicates that the new minorities are indeed "making the news" from nursing home scandals to sex deprivation of the physically handicapped. A sampling by the author of stories in major big city dailies over a one-year period shows that the new minorities are accumulating content on the "minority beat" in the areas of community development,economics, human and group relations, power and

resources, environment and ecology. Items now appearing on the media's minority agenda for the aged and handicapped include the following:

Community Development,Design and Planning:architectural barriers and impediments, special ramps, walkways, elevators, phones, water fountains, restrooms;custom homes and special housing:village retirement,"sun cities",group homes, hostels;public and institutionalized housing, segregation, concentration and isolation in central inner cities,SROs(single room occupancy),cheap rooming houses,lax building code enforcement,Skid Row;tenant and community discrimination in housing,restrictive covenants,zoning exclusions,seeing-eye dogs in apartments,alarm systems.

Economic Problems:job discrimination, re-training and placement, affirmative action, early retirement; living costs, pensions, welfare,public assistance, social security;tax advantages, discounts (fares, food stamps,rent, utilities)free checking accounts.

Human and Group Relations: participation in organizations and groups, social and institutional isolation;nursing homes, foster homes for adults;warehouses for handicapped;quadriplegics as parents; adoptions by handicapped;crime, safety and the aged and handicapped; sex and senior citizens, sexual deprivation of physically disadvantaged,retarded and reproduction;new roles for grandmothers,uncles.

Power, Government : agency funds for aged and handicapped, court litigation for civil rights, equal opportunities,affirmative action, access to voting registration and booths;access to public buildings; security(crime and fire),rights to protest and dissent versus obedient wards of state and dependence on government rather than independence and self reliance;discrimination on candidates for public offic

Health and Medical Care:costs of medical care,nursing care both visiting and institutional;special health needs, facilities and services;hunger, malnutrition, food stamps, "hot meals on wheels"; excessive medication, terminal illnesses, living wills,"right to die" legislation;blind doctors, braille menus;specialized doctors.

Transportation:mass transit safety and violence;mass transit as service for minority-disadvantaged;skill, maintenance, insurance rates for autos;access with wheel chairs, special buses, door-to-door service, dial-a-ride systems, wide doors, lifts, proximity to community facilities; reduced fares, discounts,braille guides;air travel seating, self-care, attendants, baggage limits;pedestrian rights and safety.

Education/Information/Communication: segregated schools for handicapped and "mainstreaming", adult education, free tuition and tax inequities in school districts;special college for handicapped in Weed,Calif.;libraries and aged, aids in magnification of book type, tape recorders(blind and hard of hearing),special typewriters; stereotypes and images of aged and handicapped in mass media.

Recreation/Leisure/Entertainment: public accommodations in parks, theaters etc.;museums for blind,tactile maps,braille trails;early retirement, shorter work weeks, leisure and boredom, aged and TV; sports--hemophiliacs in football,handicapped Olympics,deaf teams, blind bowlers,blind teachers and coaches.

Natural Resources/Environment/Ecology:access to nature,isolation from suburbs,outdoors;value of less food and children;communes.

As the new minorities gain access to the mass media, there remains relatively little research on the aged and communication, and even less on media and the handicapped, except the obvious need for the blind and deaf and mute to develop their own communication for function and survival. The aged have become heavy users of the media because of their isolation,[11] retirement, lack of transportation and their own physical disabilities.[12] But research in this area is increasing, and the significance of the communications of the aged and that of the handicapped may eventually merge as both of these "handicapped" group gain social and political power once they are on the public agenda for potential power.

Awareness of New Minority Images Beyond Agenda Access

Americans who do not fit the image of "Miss America" or John Wayne with youthful beauty and physical power may well be a majority, but the perpetual image of youth and power perpetuated in movies, magazines and other media gives the impression that old age and physical imperfections are for a minority.

The aged are seen as negative,[12] labeled as senile and hopelessly incompetent and fit for the wastebasket.[13] The aged are pictured as fumbling idiots on the Carol Burnett CBS Comedy Show and comedian Johnny Carson pokes fun at the Burbank elderly with their wheelchairs,bed pans, barium x-rays, wrinkled skin, canes, slow walking,loss of memory, Preparation-H, prunes and tombstones.[14] From the "Little Old Lady of Dubuque" pictured by the New Yorker magazine in the Twenties to the "little old ladies of Pasadena in tennis shoes" in the modern era of TV, the aged have had a negative image. The handicapped have not fared much better.

Television has its Raymond Burr on "Ironsides", but when country singer Mel Tillis was to advertise a dog food on a TV commercial, there was objection because he stutters. The mentally retarded are becoming more visible in both media and community and an occasional movie or TV

hero as in Charley, Teacher,Teacher, Mister Rogers Neighborhood and in episodes on Marcus Welby, The Rookies and All in the Family.[15]

In books, the image of the aged presented to younger people is that the older people are ugly, stupid and abusive, and such stereotypes are not sufficiently offset by books that show the elderly as "real people".[16] Small wonder that the child's view of the elderly is that they are wrinkled, crippled, chew funny and haven't any teeth, and are sick, sad and tired.[17] The definitions of the aged perhaps need to be changed. As psychiatrist-gerontologist Robert Butler put it:"Old people are commonplace among us rather than unusual. Longevity is no longer viewed with awe and envy now that it has been mass produced through medical science. The old are people caught in a cultural time lag---suddenly there are large numbers of them and no one knowns quite what to do."[18] But there are signs that the new minorities have created a new awareness and times may be changing.[19]

The days of ugliness associated with non-whites and the aged may be ending as both Black and Age are seen as beautiful. Youth may no longer have the edge in Hollywood or elsewhere.(Almost the same day the young, successful comedian Freddie Prinze killed himself, the older actor Bert Mustin died a natural death after a long film career.) The days of "feel sorry" for the handicapped and aged may be replaced with the right to self-expression and self-determination. The idealism of "the right to live in dignity" in the 1960s, has a possible counterpart in the realism of "the right to die with dignity" in the 1970s.

The aged and handicapped are "out of the closets", to borrow a phrase from Gay Liberation. Even politicians can now positively respond to the increasing numbers of the new minorities. While President Franklin Roosevelt, crippled by polio, was shielded by the media, George Wallace became a paraplegic on TV, and at the Republican convention

in 1976 at Kansas City, Sen. Robert Dole of Kansas, with his limp and withered right arm from World War II injuries, had his nomination for Vice-President seconded by a blind delegate from Iowa, and made his acceptance speech on television with a screen inset of a sign language interpreter.[20] Dole had told the National Rehabilitation Association the week before that he had joined the "community" of 30 million handicapped Americans on April 14, 1945, when he was injured. During the campaign, he continued to use his position to aid the handicapped, including a request for a sign language interpreter on TV during his debate with Democratic Party competitor Walter Mondale.

Dole said during his nomination he felt like Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, Democratic convention keynoter, who, like "Black Americans, had come full cycle", Dole noted.[21] Somewhat similarly, in a show of support for the new minorities, Vice-Presidential candidate Margaret Wright of the People's Party(running with Benjamin Spock) accepted her nomination in San Francisco with a clenched fist and a denunciation of discrimination, saying: "'I've been discriminated against because I'm a woman, because I'm black, because I'm poor, because I'm fat, and because I'm left-handed."[22]

In politics and/or media, a personal experience helps project an image that is positive for those seen as physically limited. Luci Johnson Nugent, daughter of the late President Johnson, had vision problems as a youth, and has worked since 1965 with Volunteers for Vision.[23] Blind singer Jose Feliciano, a Puerto Rican, has advocated braille-like bumps on paper money and coins;[24] and an architect "blinded" himself for four days with a blindfold to learn how to design space for the new Braille Institute Sight Center in Los Angeles.[25] And when actress Louise Fletcher won her Academy Award in 1976 on TV, she used sign language to thank her parents for the encouragement that won her Oscar in a movie on mental health, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest".

Both the press and politicians have shown awareness of the new minorities, especially the aged, whose cause is led nationally by the Coalition of Older and Younger Adults, nick-named by the media as the Grey Panthers, some 10,000 in number, in a group formed in 1970 in Philadelphia, and led by 70-year-old Maggie Kuhn. She declined the 1976 nomination for the People's Party, but six presidential candidates sought the Panthers' endorsement, and President Carter's mother Lillian became a member.

The Panthers are activists, who oppose age-ism and early retirement, isolation of the older from society, waste of the aged, and the powerlessness coming from dependence on the government. They seek control over their own lives and a new power base of the young and old generations united and liberated from the "terror" of age in American society. The Panthers see age as fulfillment, not degeneration and they want to be free from the age-segregated ghettos. Ms. Kuhn sees the older people as "the last big minority" who can be militant advocates who "rock the boat", while the middle aged are still tied to the Establishment. Their unity with the younger finds expression in their "Declaration of Interdependence"[26]. Although the group is involved in class action suits and campaigns from longer green lights for pedestrians to a greater say in nursing home rules, one of the main goals of the Panthers is to change the media image of older people.

The TV image of the aged is a special target. A Media Watch Committee monitors programs and lets stations and producers know their objections. Special criticism has gone to Red Foxx, Mother Jefferson, re-runs of the Dick Van Dyke Show, Mary Hartman, Phyllis, as well as the Carson and Burnett shows. The programs often depict the elderly as offensive, decrepit, senile, useless fools, feeble-minded, unhappy, stoop-shouldered,[27] and consumers of denture adhesive and laxatives. News and documentaries deal with disease and disasters and not public service

programs to help the elderly deal with their problems. Some indication of an improved picture of the aged was indicated by a segment on the TV program "Maude" on the sexual and emotional needs of the aged;[28] portions of CBS's Sixty Minutes on the elderly; and what the networks consider a "scrappy" but positive image of the elderly in programs like "Chico and the Man" and "The Waltons".[29]

Advocacy and Militance in New Media Forms Enhance Agenda,Awareness

Telethons for rare diseases by media stars and press releases on Older Americans Month and White Cane Week are not enough for the militant new minorities. The physically handicapped are "out of their closets" and are no longer hidden as were the Blacks and aged in public housing or institutions, segregated and "in their place". Although medicine, surgery and science have prolonged the lives of many aged and physically handicapped, they do not wish to be shelved in depersonalized homes, but want into the "mainstream" of society. The so-called disabled are tired of stigma, discrimination, and being treated as freaks and oddities.[30] Usage of communication may no longer be restricted to their "community" and indeed the Gray Panthers' movement is not restricted to the aged as they "are a group of people--old and young--drawn together by deeply felt common concerns for human liberation abd social change. . . .to work to build a new power base in our society uniting the people presently disenfranchised and oppressed."[31]

The social movement of these newer minorities appears to be developing out of the social fragmentation, alienation, specialized differentiation and a loss or lack of identity in the larger society. Criticism of the mass media, which is expected to be all things to all people, is followed by a reaction against mass communications by using access to create minority identity through feedback. It might be called the "new journalism" of minorities and it frequently uses the language of grievance:liberation, discrimination,civil rights, ghettos,credibility gap.[32]

Because of these felt frustrations, it is small wonder that both the aged and handicapped have turned to pickets and demonstrations to attract media attention and create news. Such marches and sit-ins are somewhere in between the use of existing media forms for complaint (letters to editors, license renewal challenges etc.) and the more destructive and negative forms of communications violence(riots,assassinations, letter bombs etc.)

"Power to the people" has been changed to "Power to the Disabled". "Black Power" is "Crutch Power" as the blind, deaf and amputees in wheelchairs seek visibility in public places from courts to conventions. Photogenic on TV like Blacks in the Sixties, wheel chairs and visible physical conditions become ready-made "picket" signs. In May 1973, hundreds of such demonstrators kept an all-night vigil at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. to protest President Nixon's veto of the Rehabilitation Act. In June 1974,two hundred handicapped demonstrators marched to support a state Human Rights Bill for New York.Ten handicapped college students went from Carbondale, Ill, to St. Louis in wheelchairs on a "jaunt for jobs" and in May 1975 in Cape Cod, Mass., the Easter Seal Society sponsored a 9-mile wheelchair-a-thon to call attention to architectural barriers in public buildings. And in 1974 about 100 handicapped blocked traffic 3½ hours in Midtown Manhattan until they were assured an exemption from the state's gasoline sales program.[33]

Just as the Gray Panthers embrace the cause of young and old, the handicapped represent a variety of disadvantaged, including many Vietnam veterans and college students, such as those from Galludet College for the Deaf in Washington D.C., who with others staged a sit-in at HEW offices in early April 1977 demanding civil rights regulations. Sponsored by the American Coalition of Citizens With Disabilities, the demonstrators flashed slogans in sign language demanding "Why not

now"? similar to racial minorities in the 1960s.[34] The new militance represents a break from more formal communications of the past. Organizations and some institutions appear less timid. Those affected speak up and speak out for themselves. They demand agencies paid in their cause be accountable with deeds, not rhetoric. They want independence, not overprotection and subjugation. They want rights, not pity. They want power, not mere "good will" and they see the "disabled community, as a viable political and social force".[35] And they are getting the public podium to say this. Press accounts of"The Blind American of the Year" and "Miss Wheelchair America" are now seen as condesension. When the United Cerebral Palsy Telephon in New York attracted famous movie and television stars, demonstrators in wheelchairs and on crutches marched to protest being portrayed as disabled people who will never be able to do much more than walk or maybe talk.[36]

The angry blind, some 1.7 million Americans, with 32,000 added each year, are seeking equal rights in jobs, housing and transportation. They are suing landlords and airlines, and saying "Down With the Mister Magoo" image because they insist they can show they are not as limited as they are pictured in the media.[37]

The voices of handicapped are quotable. "What is needed is a civil-rights bill for the physically limited. Racial minorities, women and the aged have this protection . . . .The physically limited are now organizing and lobbying for their rights as the blacks did twenty years ago and the women did ten years ago.. . . .Medical science has provided life, but where is liberty if I cannot cross the street because of a manmade barrier, the curb?"[37]

They want a voice in decision-making, but also visible recognition of that, as one example shows:"Mailing absentee ballots to handicapped persons is a laudable way to allow them to vote, but an important part of participatory democracy is being able to cast one's own vote under the

light of public scrutiny and with pride in being a fully participatory member of our democracy".[38] The handicapped also identify with the larger movement of minorities--Blacks, women and others. One building designer at Michigan State University,paralyzed 12 years ago by a motorcycle accident, helped set up a political action group with marches and letter-writing campaigns, helped to write the state's new handicapped civil rights law and published newsletters to help the handicapped organize.[39] A quadraplegic woman at the university "began working for black civil rights in the 1960's and switched to organizing handicapped when she realized that a person in a wheelchair faced the same kind of discrimination that blacks did."[40]

In addition to the utilization of militance in pseudo-events, the new minorities appear to have re-discovered and are using many of the old reliable media forms, which the more conservative think are more constructive tools of advocacy.and education. First of all, the conference and convention on the aged and handicapped is now commonplace with their communications problems often accented.[41] (The National Paraplegia Foundation, started after World War II, has used media such as handbooks, film, pamphlets, television, and newspapers and magazines to convey its message.)

In recent years, newspapers carry far more features on the new minority, from articles on stuttering to problems of the aged; more letters to the editor on "Op Ed" pages;frequent editorials supporting the new minorities; support from regular columnists, and special columnists such as "Inez Says" by Inez C. Jeffry;"Senior Spotlight", "Heartline" out of Dayton, Ohio;"A Time to Live" by Bob Walton;"Hints for Handicapped" by Patricia Galbreath(herself handicapped in a wheelchair"), and the increasing "Action Lines" frequently deal with questions pertaining to these groups.[42] The blind themselves are not unknown on daily newspaper staffs.

Magazines have also been responsive. For example, Parks and Recreation magazine issued a special minorities edition in April 1975, including articles on Blacks, handicapped, women, and Chicanos. The UNESCO Courier of March 1974 dealt with the handicapped, with special attention to the Olympics of the handicapped. Texas Monthly, like many other magazines, makes itself available to the blind through casette tapes. The Journal of Broadcasting for Winter 1976 dealt with the communication aspects of the aged. Retirement Living is serving the needs of elderly and there is an expanding new market for freelancing about the aged.[43]

In another aspect of traditional print media, newsletters have been of great use to these new minorities. They are often more used than daily newspapers when it comes to contact with institutions for the aged shut-ins without transportation.[44] There are also specialized newsletters for the handicapped such as Accent on Living Inc.(Bloomington, Ill.);Wheels to Independence(Albany,Troy, Schenectady, N.Y.); The Green Papers, a publication for rehabilitation; plus others from state chapters of the National Paraplegia Foundation.

The telephone, U.S. Mail and radio have been rediscovered by the new minorities. Telephone reassurance set-ups are common arrangements to help outsiders give the isolated aged a psychological boost and refer them and agencies to each other for help.[45] The deaf can now use teletype "ears for the deaf", whereby a phone translates frequencies into typewritten messages. The first directory came out in 1968 and now lists 14,000 users. In Texas, the deaf can call their state representatives in this manner.[46] There are also voice-activated phones for those unable to dial. Another use of the phone is the national "Call for Action", a radio-TV program offering confidential phone information to disabled in 42 cities, which in 1975 assisted 73,000 persons with agency referrals and other matters of their concern.

The Post Office is also being utilized by those with physical impairment. Absentee voting and voter registration by mail have special advantages. Also, pre-packaged "meals-in-a-box" and plastic-packaged food for the elderly are being mailed parcel post.[47] And in the New York area, an "Early Alert Program" is in operation whereby postmen inform agencies and relatives of elderly whose full mailboxe ay indicate illness or trouble.[48]

In the field of radio, the blind are being served. New York City has has a Touch Network. There is a desire for radio to play music for the adult market; and in Philadelphia, one radio station reads "adult" books for the blind.[49] There is an Audio-Visual Broadcasting System in Glendale,Calif.; and KESD-FM at SOuth Dakota State University broadcasts "news"especially for the visually(print) handicapped in the form of short stories, novels, syndicated columns, and magazine articles, all carried on a special sub-channel with special receivers.[50] Tape recordings have also been used widely for magazine articles and books, and the Minnesota Radio Talking Books has scheduled a reading of Alex Haley's Roots for 31 consecutive hours on a closed circuit hookup for the blind.[51]

On television, the talk shows have given Gray Panther Maggie Kuhn many hours, and there is a PBS series called "Over Easy" scheduled to discuss in magazine format the public image of the aged, their self esteem, and their problems such as health, housing, transportation and retirement.

For the blind, television has one station, WMAL-TV in Washington D.C., where a talk show host reads braille,[52] but television has responded to the deaf minority.After the Dole nomination and the Ford-Carter debates, there are many stations using insets for sign language or typed captions on the screens.Some 20 million hard-of-hearing Americans are expected to benefit.[53] (There is also a Visual Communication Arts group of deaf actors, newscasters, artists and technicians in Studio City,Calif.)

In addition, there are numerous other ways the aged and handicapped are using communications. There are campus guides for the handicapped showing access routes;and an International Blind Writers Association in Houston. There is discussion of special license plates for the handicapped and a special "think tank" for mental resources of the retired.[54] There are ombudsmen for the elderly; a special Disability Rights Center for handicapped consumers of special equipment in Washington;[55] a special provision for the sightless to "handle" and see museum exhibits in Milwaukee;[56] a program for whistle-blowing by elderly being attacked by muggers in big cities; and a campaign by the Advertising Council of America urging "Gray Liberation" for the elderly.

The Future: Advocacy,Awareness Agenda for Minorities Unlimited ?

Modern medicine and more survivors of technological and transportation accidents and future wars may all increase the number of physically-limited people who may continue to see themselves as disadvantaged minorities who can use media as a means of self and social realization.

People not in wheelchairs or on crutches also see themselves as frequent victims of discrimination for their physical nature. Those considered ugly,face discrimination. A Chicago ordinance (although unenforced) bans ugly or deformed people from the streets.[57] Research psychologist Leonard Saxe points out that the "dysfunctional stereotype" of ugliness harms people, and "discrimination against the ugly is more unconscious than racism". He says "The media--especially movies and television--have had a great deal to do with our preoccupation with attractiveness." The "long-term solution is to eliminate prejudice in general. It can be done, as progress in the fight against racism shows."[58]

So-called ugly people are fighting discrimination through court suits, picketing of businesses, group meetings, press releases, and organizations such as Uglies Unlimited and the National Association to Aid

Fat Americans.[59] They argue that fat people suffer job discrimination having nothing to do with their skills, and that they face a social stigma which may bring isolation, depression or even suicide. They point out that the media often force people into thinking "thin and slim" while the culture encourages indulgence. Fat Pride by Marvin Grosswirth is a "survival handbook" for the overweight who "can lead a fulfilling, contented life".[60]

Other parts of this movement are the "Overeaters Anonymous", the "Fat Liberation" groups and the "Fat Underground", who suggest that Fat is Beautiful and the social condemnation of it may be as much a handicap as the obesity itself.[61] The "Fat Underground" challenges the medical notion that fat necessarily is unhealthy, and they "are committed to changing society rather than adapting themselves to it". They feel they are oppressed by society at large and are the scapegoats of a guilty, well-fed nation.[62]

Others of these with endocrine,nutritional and metabolic diseases are the dwarfs and midgets, organized in 1957 by a Hollywood actor, Billy Barty as "Little People Inc.",which has 3,000 members in the U.S. and chapters in Europe, New Zealand and Australia. Just as the fat people argue that Rembrandt, Renoir and Rubens painted fat women, Little People point out that Napoleon and many American presidents have been short. The organization, for people less than 4-feet,10-inches, fights discrimination in jobs, architectural and public facility barriers,the image of circus clowns,elves,gnomes,goblins,pixies, and leprechauns. They want to "think big" and be known as people, rather than face an overly-protective society.[63] They insist on public acceptance for their talent rather than their size, and the estimated 100,000 dwarfs in the U.S. think they are the smallest and perhaps the last minority.[64]

Other groups with physical limitations are organizing in the tradition of the new minorities. Epileptics complain that there is public

ignorance about them and a stigma and unrealistic mystery about those with this most common neurological disorder.[65] Cancer patients also complain that they are discriminated against in jobs and sex.[66] They, like others, also insist on the patients' "right to know" as a civil right.[67]

The extent to which the physically handicapped might be defined is indicated by the disease classification by the World Health Organization(WHO) which includes those with infective and parasitic diseases--lepers have their own colonies and own magazine;other fat groups such as Weight Watchers and TOPS(Take Off Pounds Sensibly); Blood disease groups such as anemia and hemophilia blood foundations;Nervous and sense organ disease groups like palsy and sclerosis groups in addition to the blind and deaf;Circulatory,respiratory and digestive groups such as coronary and heart clubs, emphysema and ostomy organizations;Those with diseases of skin,genitourinary, pregnancy areas and congenital anomalies(mongoloids and facially disfigured);Neoplasms covering the laryngectomees(who hold their own national convention);Musculoskeletal and connective tissue groups(mostly already cited as handicapped in wheelchairs);and many resulting from increasing accidents and violence.

Arguments are arising about new definitions of the handicapped. Alcoholics, addicts, homosexuals, gamblers,schizophrenics, child abusers, the retarded and the gifted, and a whole array of the mentally ill all may contend they too are part of the new minorities. Alcoholics, for example, now boast they they too are "out of the closets" and media figures such as astronaut Edwin(Buzz) Aldrin,COngressman Wilbur Mills, and ex-Brookly Dodger Don Newcombe make headlines as they speak out for this previously-silent minority.[68]

Prejudice toward mental illness was indicated by the Eagleton nomination case.[69] Now, even the left handers complain of prejudice against them.[70] And speaking of mental and physical minorities, the

21,CCC members of MENSA, the organization for those with high IQs, claim that they too face discrimination for their brains and mental craving for stimulating conversation. They argue that they represent the top 2% of the population.(Their public relations officer is the author of Fat Pride). The MENSA executive secretary in New York Margot Seitelman says that "intelligent people are another deprived minority", but she says "I don't think we have as many closet MENSAS as we used to."[71] They too feel liberated!

More and more fragmented minorities may be seeking community by identification with others with similar physical characteristics(such as skin pigment,muscles, blood,sex organs and other body parts in various stages of growth and deterioration). The communications media are used to bring together these people with common physical conditions, with age and physical handicaps finding some common physiological base.

The notion of "community" is often treated as sociological and psychological in nature, but this increasing pattern for physical ties to provide communion may herald a new trend for social cohesion and hint that mind and soul alone do not hold society together. In this respect, the linkage provided by communications for minorities becomes a crucial element not only as community service but as community substance.

If common social issues become the concern of these segmented physical minorities, then media will have helped re-create a larger community. Perhaps the common human experience of physical change, deterioration, old age and eventual death provides the universal tie that binds the new minorities, who may be the New Majority.

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